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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Dissemination of information on decolonization during the period from April 2013 to March 2014

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 68/96, provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information to disseminate information on decolonization, with particular emphasis on the options of self-determination available for the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Unless otherwise mentioned, it covers the period from April 2013 to March 2014.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 68/96 of 17 December 2013, considered it important to continue and expand its efforts to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information on decolonization, with particular emphasis on the options of self-determination available for the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. To that end, it requested the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, through the United Nations information centres in the relevant regions, to actively engage and seek new and innovative ways to disseminate material to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to further enhance the information provided on the United Nations decolonization website and to continue to include the full series of reports of the regional seminars on decolonization, the statements and scholarly papers presented at those seminars and links to the full series of reports on the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In paragraph 4 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts to update web-based information on the assistance programmes available to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In paragraph 5, the Assembly requested the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Public Information to implement the recommendations of the Special Committee and to continue their efforts to take measures through all media available, including publications, radio and television, as well as the Internet, to give publicity to the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization.

2. The present report, prepared in response to that mandate, covers the period from April 2013 to March 2014.

II. 2013 Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, Quito, 28 to 30 May 2013

3. The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, also known as the Special Committee of 24 on Decolonization, held its 2013 annual regional seminar in Quito, Ecuador, from 28 to 30 May. The seminar, hosted by the Government of Ecuador, was conducted within the framework of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2011-2020).

4. The Department arranged for the deployment of a press officer from the United Nations Information Centre in Bogota to cover the seminar. The officer provided media support and issued four press releases, which were carried by the Meetings Coverage Section of the Department.

III. Coverage of issues before the General Assembly

Services to the media

5. During the reporting period, the Department press service issued a total of 38 press releases on decolonization in English and French, covering meetings, statements and hearings by various United Nations bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

6. United Nations activities on issues related to decolonization continued to be highlighted via United Nations Radio programmes and the multilingual United Nations News Centre portal, one of the most heavily visited segments of the United Nations mega-site. Stories on decolonization, including coverage of such events as the Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, were also distributed through an e-mail-based news alerts service, in English and French, and RSS feeds, as well as on social media accounts, including Facebook and Twitter. The United Nations News Centre stories on decolonization issues were picked up by an array of external websites, including media outlets and news aggregators, and educational and non-governmental organizations.

Unit J Nations website

7. During the reporting period, the Department continued to maintain and update the United Nations and decolonization website in the six official languages (www.un.org/en/decolonization/), adding new content on related issues. Attracting a growing number of visitors, the site registered more than 280,000 page views in the period from April 2013 to March 2014.

8. Activities and issues related to decolonization were also highlighted through a series of special pages maintained by the Department, such as the International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (www.un.org/en/events/nonselfgoverning/), which had 12,500 page views during the same period, Global Issues: Decolonization (www.un.org/en/globalissues/decolonization/) and Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: 50th Anniversary: 14 December 2010 (www.un.org/en/events/decolonization50).

9. The Department also used its accounts on social media platforms to raise awareness about decolonization issues and to drive traffic to the decolonization website.

United Nations Television

10. United Nations Television covered live more than 30 events on decolonization, including all of the formal and open meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), as well as the adoption of the Committee's reports in the General Assembly plenary meeting. Coverage of all of these meetings was also made available live and on-demand on the United Nations Web TV website (http://webtv.un.org).

United Nations Photo Unit

11. The United Nations Photo Unit covered the meetings of the Special Political Committee on Decolonization and related press conferences. It continued to digitize and make available legacy photos showing the historical work of the Organization on decolonization.

12. The United Nations Audiovisual Library provided both photographic and film material to an independent filmmaker in South Africa for a documentary on the independence of Namibia entitled *Paths to Freedom*.

IV. Visitors Services

13. The topic of decolonization, including the roles of the Trusteeship Council and the Special Committee, was regularly included in the narrative of the guided tours of United Nations Headquarters in New York provided by the Department. Information provided by the tour guides in the newly renovated Trusteeship Council chamber focused on explaining to visitors the historical process of decolonization and recent developments.

V. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

14. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library provides research and information services on decolonization and related issues on an ongoing basis. During the reporting period, the Library handled a number of requests for research and information services on this topic. Requests were received from Member States that were tracing their decolonization history, independence and participation at the United Nations. Requests were also received from staff members, researchers and scholars, who wished to make effective use of the rich documentary archives of the Organization, including landmark speeches, treaties, maps, Trusteeship Council reports and other relevant information sources.

15. Through its retrospective digitization programme, the Library continued to digitize and upload important United Nations documents on decolonization to the Official Documents System (ODS) to ensure that an increasing number became accessible through the Internet, while ensuring the preservation of the original versions. During the reporting period, 388 documents (representing 5,846 pages) pertaining to decolonization were digitized and posted on ODS. This includes reports, in various official languages, of visiting missions to Trust Territories and of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, as well as summary records of the meetings of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, and of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, held from 2 September 1948 to 10 May 1963.

VI. United Nations publications

16. During the reporting period, the Department published volume 63 (2009) of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* and continued work on volume 64 (2010). With its comprehensive coverage of the annual activities of the United Nations, including

those related to decolonization, the *Yearbook* presents the work of the General Assembly, the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee, as well as general decolonization issues and the support provided by the Economic and Social Council to Non-Self-Governing Territories. The United Nations Yearbook Twitter account regularly features historical items related to decolonization.

17. The latest (2014) edition of the United Nations primer *Basic Facts about the United Nations* appeared in English during the reporting period. The book documents the contributions of the United Nations to decolonization up to the present day.

VII. United Nations information centres and services

18. Through print, broadcast, electronic and social media, the global network of United Nations information centres continued to raise awareness of the issue of decolonization. It disseminated information materials and promoted the work of the Fourth Committee, often in local languages, to young people, civil society and the media.

19. As in the previous period, the United Nations Information Service in Geneva issued press releases on the work of the Human Rights Council and other human rights treaty bodies and experts that touched on the effects of colonization and decolonization in the context of country reviews. Themes related to decolonization were also addressed during the news briefings of the Service.

20. The work of the United Nations in the area of decolonization was a regular feature of the guided tour and briefing programmes of the United Nations Visitors Services in Geneva, primarily in the context of an overview of the history, main activities and achievements of the Organization. In 2013, the guided tour programme of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, including the new thematic tour on the history of the United Nations, addressed the role of the Trusteeship Council in the decolonization process, welcoming a total of 104,222 visitors and organizing information programmes for 2,293 people. Similarly, 2,799 visitors took a guided tour of the United Nations Office in Nairobi and listened to briefings and lectures on the issue of decolonization.

21. From an educational outreach standpoint, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna produced a compilation of materials designed as guidance for educators to teach students about the work of the United Nations, including the role of the Trusteeship Council.

VIII. Conclusions

22. The Department of Public Information, as the public voice of the Organization, continues to disseminate information about decolonization. Using both traditional and new information and communications technologies, it highlights the need for immediate and full implementation of the 1960 United Nations Declaration on Decolonization. The work of the Special Committee on Decolonization, which is the intergovernmental body devoted to advancing the United Nations decolonization agenda, remains at the centre of the Department outreach activities with media, civil society and educational institutions.

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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

French Polynesia

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources and is extracted from public sources on the Internet.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: French Polynesia is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter (General Assembly resolution 67/265 of 17 May 2013), administered by France.

Representative of administering power: Lionel Beffre, High Commissioner of the Republic (since 21 August 2013).

Geography: French Polynesia occupies a vast maritime zone in the south Pacific, covering an area comparable to that of Europe (2.5 million km²).

Land area: The 118 islands that comprise French Polynesia, grouped in five archipelagos, represent a land area of about 3,600 km².

Exclusive economic zone: 4,767,242 km².[a]

Population: 268,207 (22 August 2012, French Polynesia Statistical Institute).

Ethnic composition: Maohi (65 per cent); Demis (mixed race) (16 per cent); Chinese (5 per cent); Popâa (12 per cent, of whom 98 per cent are French).

Languages: French, Tahitian, Marquesan, Tuamotan, Mangarevan, the Austral islands language: Ra'ivavae, Rapa, Ruturu, English, Chinese Hakka, Cantonese, Vietnamese.

Capital: Papeete.

Head of territorial Government: Gaston Flosse (since 2013).

Main political parties: The political groupings in Congress are: Tahoera'a Huiraatira, Union for Democracy, Ti'a Porinetia.

Elections: The most recent election of representatives to the Assembly of French Polynesia took place on 5 May 2013. The next municipal elections are due in 2014.

Parliament: The Assembly of French Polynesia consists of 57 representatives elected by universal suffrage.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita: US$ 26,290 (2011).

Unemployment rate: 11.7 per cent (2007).

Economy: Fishing and copra farming are the two traditional activities. Along with commerce, the economic fabric is completed by handicrafts, industry, construction and public works, and more recently tourism, along with aquaculture and, in particular, pearl farming (black pearl cultivation) which has become the Territory's leading export in value terms.

Monetary unit: The Pacific franc, or CFP franc (CFPF).

Brief history: The Polynesian people became established as a result of successive waves of migration from 300 AD to the end of the fourteenth century. Europeans first reached French Polynesia in 1521 (Magellan) and started to settle after the arrival of Captain Wallis (1767). Since the early nineteenth century, the Pomare dynasty extended its influence over both Tahiti and the Tuamotu and Leeward Islands. It signed a protectorate treaty with France in 1842; then, in 1880, King Pomare V granted France sovereignty over the islands that were dependencies of the Tahitian crown, thereby giving rise to the French Establishment in Oceania. The latter became an overseas collectivity with the creation of the French Union in 1946 and has been referred to as French Polynesia since 1957. The Polynesians confirmed their allegiance to France in a referendum held in 1958 (*Source*: Overseas Issuing Institute).

[a] *Source*: The "Sea Around Us" project, a collaboration between the University of British Columbia and the Pew Environment Group (www.seaaroundus.org).

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

1. According to the French Government portal serving the collectivities, which is maintained by the General Directorate of Public Finances and the General Directorate of Local Collectivities:

> "The Constitution of 27 October 1946 classified Polynesia as an Overseas Territory (*territoire d'Outre-Mer* — TOM), and that status was maintained by the 1958 Constitution. The constitutional review of 28 March 2003 amended article 74 of the Constitution in relation to TOMs, since when the term 'TOM' has been replaced by 'Overseas Collectivity' (*collectivité d'Outre-Mer* — COM). Legislators were tasked with defining the organizational and operational rules of the collectivity's institutions and the electoral arrangements of its Deliberative Assembly. This status was adopted after consultation by the Deliberative Assembly of the COM in question.
>
> Polynesia's special status was established by Law 2004-192 of 27 February 2004, which specified an organization that was different from that of common law and close to an assembly-based parliamentary system. The office of the President of Polynesia was thus created, with a representative function, directing the actions of government and administration, and promulgating the 'laws of the country' (*lois du pays*). The Polynesian Government, comprising between 7 and 10 ministers, is responsible for conducting the collectivity's policy. The collectivity's deliberative body is the Assembly of Polynesia, which is elected by direct universal suffrage every five years."

2. Also, according to the French Government portal serving the collectivities:

> "Despite being an original institutional organization, Polynesia does not have political autonomy; but it does enjoy an administrative autonomy and a specific law is applicable to it, partly based on the regulatory speciality principle, pursuant to which the organic legislative body of each COM is tasked with defining the conditions for applying applicable laws and regulations. Metropolitan law is therefore only applicable when explicitly indicated. Moreover, Polynesia's Deliberative Assembly has 'certain categories of act, in accordance with the competencies it exercises in the legal domain' commonly known as 'laws of the country'. These acts are applicable in very broad domains that form part of Polynesia's specific jurisdiction 'in principle' (*compétence de principe*) and can be appealed only to the Council of State and not to the administrative court.
>
> This administrative autonomy entails the sharing of competencies between the State and Polynesia. The State has competencies in the domains of 'sovereignty, referred to in Article 14 of the Organic Law of 2004', and in 37 other sectors, such as 'inter-community cooperation', 'police and civil aviation security', etc., which legislators decided to attribute to the State. For its part, in addition to common-law jurisdiction, Polynesia 'can participate, under State control, in exercising its competencies in regard to guarantees for the exercise of public freedoms granted throughout national territory'" (art. 74, para. 11 of Law 2004-192 of 27 February 2004).

3. The institutions of French Polynesia consist of: the President, the Government, the Assembly of French Polynesia and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council. The role and competencies of these institutions are defined by Statutory Organic Law.

4. According to the 2012 annual report on French Polynesia published by the Overseas Issuing Institute in 2013, "The President is elected by the Assembly of French Polynesia by secret ballot for a five-year term. He forms the Government, by appointing the Vice-President and ministers, whom he can dismiss; and he directs the action of ministers. The President promulgates the laws of the country and signs the acts decided upon in the Council of Ministers. He is the originator of the budget and directs territorial administration. His mandate is compatible with that of Deputy, Senator or Mayor, and it can be shortened by the vote of a no-confidence by the Assembly, or in the event of the latter's dissolution."

5. According to the report, the Government serves as French Polynesia's executive power and conducts its policy. It "meets every week in the Council of Ministers, which has collective and collegiate responsibility for affairs within its jurisdiction. The Government authorizes draft decisions to be submitted to the Assembly and enabling measures needed to implement them. It also has wide-ranging regulatory power. It is consulted on a mandatory basis, depending on the case in question, by the Minister for Overseas Territories or by the High Commissioner in spheres of State competency."

6. According to the annual report, the Assembly of French Polynesia, consisting of 57 members elected by direct universal suffrage for five-year terms, "debates all issues within the collectivity's jurisdiction, other than those devolved to the Council of Ministers or the President of the Government. The Assembly adopts the laws of the country, over which the Council of State exercises jurisdictional control, and the decisions submitted by the Government. It votes on French Polynesia's budget and accounts and oversees actions taken by the Government. The latter may also be overturned by a motion of no-confidence; and, conversely, the Assembly can be dissolved by Decree issued by the President of the Republic, at the request of local government."

7. The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (CESC), a consultative body, consists of representatives from professional groupings, labour unions, organizations and associations involved in the economic, social and cultural life of the collectivity. According to the annual report, the Council "issues a range of recommendations on issues submitted by the Government and the Assembly. It must be consulted for advice on economic, social or cultural projects, or on draft decisions prepared by the Government or the Assembly of French Polynesia. It may also undertake studies on issues within its jurisdiction, on its own initiative and subject to a two-thirds majority vote of its members. The Council consists of 51 members appointed by their peers for a four-year term, and distributed in three colleges (representatives of wage earners, entrepreneurs, and self-employed workers, and sociocultural sectors). Its president is elected for two years."

8. According to the website of the Inter-Ministerial Public Employment Exchange in French Polynesia:

> "The High Commissioner of the Republic in French Polynesia is the depositary of French State authority and is responsible for promoting national interests, respect for the law, international commitments and administrative control; he

or she represents members of the Government, oversees the implementation of regulations and Government decisions, and directs the deconcentrated services of State civil administrations in French Polynesia, under ministerial authority.

He or she is also the depositary of the powers of the Republic; directs State services in French Polynesia; takes decisions on issues that are relevant to the competency of the office and approves the State's civil revenues and expenses.

The High Commissioner ensures public order and upholds public freedoms and both individual and collective rights in French Polynesia. As a government delegate, the High Commissioner is responsible for conducting State action at sea; exercises the functions of Prefect of the Defence Zone.

He or she is authorized to commit the State on behalf of French Polynesia, or the communities or their groupings; speaks on behalf of the State at their deliberative assemblies; signs, on behalf of the State, agreements reached between the State and French Polynesia.

He or she also ensures the regular exercise of competencies by the authorities of French Polynesia and by those of the communities, and the legality of their acts; and oversees private organizations and persons benefiting from State subsidies, on behalf of the State."

II. Economy

A. General

9. According to information from the French Ministry for Overseas Territories, fishing and copra production are the two traditional activities in the islands of the Polynesian archipelagos, which extend over vast stretches of ocean. In addition to commerce, the economic fabric is completed by handicrafts, industry, construction and public works, and more recently by tourism, aquaculture and, in particular, pearl farming (the cultivation of black pearls) which has become the leading exporter in value terms.

10. According to the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the Territory displays a heavy concentration of economic and administrative activities on the island of Tahiti. Papeete is the main source of employment and hub of economic activities. The arrival of the Pacific Experimentation Centre in the early 1960s clearly disrupted the economic balances and social organization inherited from the colonial period and from traditional society. The tertiary sector has largely developed to the detriment of the primary sector and handicraft activities; and it now plays a preponderant role in the Polynesian economy, generating nearly three quarters of total value-added.

11. The Council has also noted that, since the date of the moratorium on nuclear testing in 1992, efforts to restructure the economy have resulted in the implementation of a Development Charter; and, following the definitive halting of nuclear testing in 1996, a vast strategic programme was adopted to develop economic sectors considered as priorities: tourism, pearl farming and fishing. Nonetheless, 20 years on, French Polynesia has still not achieved the strategic

objectives of developing its own resources and reducing its dependence on financial transfers from the State.

12. French Polynesia's unified programming paper for the Tenth European Development Fund of 2013 states that the economic situation has deteriorated since 2008. The economic challenges identified in the paper consist of revitalizing currently struggling sectors, on which Polynesian development is based, such as tourism, pearl farming and fishing. The new technologies sector, on the one hand, and renewable energies and the primary sector (agriculture, aquaculture) and their use by agrifood industries, on the other, represent new growth hubs. The new technologies sector is open to the world, whereas the other sectors pursue food and energy self-sufficiency. These sectors will need to help create new jobs to meet the needs of both urban centres and the more distant archipelagos.

B. Agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and pearl farming

13. According to the report by the Overseas Issuing Institute mentioned in paragraph 4, Polynesian agriculture is based on small-scale family farms that practise polyculture. Their development is hindered by the farmers' lack of training and a shortage of land suitable for crop growing (difficult relief in the higher islands, poor soils on the atolls, compounded by a lack of land division, etc.). The Society Islands Archipelago is the country's leading agricultural region, encompassing 60 per cent of all farms in French Polynesia. Other archipelagos have more specialized agriculture: the Tuamotu and Marquise islands are the main producers of copra, while the Austral Islands have truck farming.

14. Thanks to its exclusive economic zone, French Polynesia has major fishery potential. Nonetheless, fishing is currently enduring a crisis driven by both conjunctural and structural factors. As a result of the depletion of fishery stocks in 2003-2006 and the occurrence of the El Niño climatic event, the profitability of fishing fleets has declined. Moreover, fishing activity lacks skilled workers, and some large-scale fishing vessels do not comply fully with the regulations. In 2012, the fishery sector nonetheless posted good results, particularly in terms of exports, where earnings almost doubled year-on-year (CFPF 1.3 billion compared to CFPF 700 million in 2011). Aquaculture in French Polynesia is carried on by five farms, specialized in shrimp culture, fish farming, or coral aquaculture. The fisheries service estimates annual sales at around CFPF 110 million.

15. Tahitian pearl cultivation has become a key sector of the Polynesian economy, generating three quarters of the country's export earnings in the decade of 2000, and providing viable economic activity in the remote archipelagos (Tuamotu, Gambier).

C. Industrial sector

16. Despite severe structural constraints (specifically, the small domestic market, which restricts economies of scale for activities targeting local demand; relatively high labour costs, which make Polynesian products less competitive; and heavy dependence in terms of raw materials and energy), French Polynesia has nonetheless succeeded in creating an industry based on three major hubs: agrifood, shipbuilding, and the manufacture of intermediate construction goods, supported by

manufacturing activities (furniture, textiles, printing). Local industry development benefits from customs protection in the form of the local development import tax.

D. Transport and communications

17. According to information from the French Ministry for Overseas Territories, the port of Papeete is French Polynesia's maritime link with the outside world. It is managed by a public enterprise, the autonomous Port of Papeete. Since its first master plan in 1987, it has expanded its infrastructure to meet to the requirements of economic growth. French Polynesia has air connections to all continents: Asia (Japan); Oceania (New Caledonia, New Zealand, Cook Islands); North America (United States); South America (Chile); and Europe. It has one international airport in Tahiti (Faa'a) owned by the State. In 2010, operation of the airport was handed over to a mixed-economy enterprise, Aéroport de Tahiti, whose capital is shared between French Polynesia, the French Development Agency, and the Egis Corporation, a subsidiary of Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations.

18. Nonetheless, according to the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, Polynesia is located off the trans-Pacific shipping lanes and air routes that link the Pacific Rim countries, mainly those of Asia, the Americas and Australia.

E. Tourism

19. The Overseas Issuing Institute report shows that the tourism sector contributes about 7 per cent of French Polynesia's gross domestic product (GDP), ahead the country's leading export sector, pearl farming. Broadly defined, there were 2,748 tourism enterprises in 2012 (3 per cent of the Polynesian business fabric), employing 9,869 people (almost 16 per cent of wage-earning employment). Polynesian tourism is basically built around two types of market: on-land tourism and cruiser tourism. In 2012, the former accounted for 85 per cent of tourist arrivals in French Polynesia. The Territory has two categories of hotel: small family hotels (guest houses, bed and breakfasts, furnished tourist apartments) and graded hotels mainly catering to the needs of international tourists.

20. According to the document "Le tourisme en outre-mer: un indispensable sursaut" [Overseas tourism: a crucial leap], published by the French Court of Auditors in February 2014, the number of cruiser arrivals in French Polynesia has been in steady decline, having dropped by 48.2 per cent between 2003 and 2011.

F. Environment

21. According to the Overseas Issuing Institute, the Government has set a 50 per cent target for the proportion of renewables in total energy use by 2020, as part of its sustainable development strategy. Over 60 per cent of energy consumption is currently supplied by hydrocarbons, while the remainder comes from hydroelectric power and marginally from solar energy (photo-voltaic). There are two thermal power facilities on the island of Tahiti (Vairaatoa, Punaruu) and five hydroelectric plants (Papenoo, Faatautia, Vaihiria, Titaaviri and Vaite). On the other islands, thermal power predominates. Wastewater treatment is still largely left to individual

initiative, and only 25 per cent of the population is connected to treatment stations, either individual or collective, with limited effectiveness. The lack of wastewater sanitation is one of the major causes of lake and river pollution. An estimated total of 130,000 tons of sewage is produced each year (75 per cent of this in Tahiti), which poses a major challenge to the Territory — accentuated by the dispersion of the islands and large distances between them. Responsibility for waste management rests with the communities, which collect and treat domestic solid waste.

22. In its report entitled "L'aménagement des plages publiques en Polynésie française: Entre une indispensable exploitation et valorisation touristiques?" adopted in October 2013, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council states that:

> "Owing to its geographic location and the specifics of its environmental, economic and social conditions, French Polynesia is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as coral bleaching, the impact of cyclones and rising sea levels on ecosystems and infrastructures, the emergence of new invasive species and potential diseases, etc. Climate change poses a serious threat to the country's environment and economy: 30 per cent of Polynesian islands are under threat today."

III. Social conditions

A. General

23. French Polynesia's unified programming document, cites a study made by the French Development Agency, pointing out that an estimated 19.7 per cent of households have incomes below the relative poverty line. The study also argues that major income inequalities are being maintained; households expect relative poverty to worsen; imperfect targeting of social transfers and a lack of progress in terms of direct taxation on income leaves a wide margin for public policy to reduce inequalities and, consequently, poverty; and the volatility of income particularly affects households at the bottom of the income scale, and those who are not protected by wage-earner status.

B. Employment

24. According to the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the labour market is dominated by the tertiary sector, which accounts for 80 per cent of direct wage-paying jobs declared to the Social Security Fund. The public sector plays an important role, thanks to the establishment and activity of the Pacific Experimentation Centre, which has resulted in large-scale hiring. This sector now employs nearly 15,000 people, or 13 per cent of the economically active population. The labour market is dominated by wage employment and is heavily influenced by the demographic situation — characterized by the fact that over one third of the population is under 20 years of age, and compounded by a declining fertility rate and lengthening life expectancy, which speeds up population ageing. Forecasts made by the French Polynesia Statistical Institute suggest that individuals 60 years of age and older will represent 17 per cent of the population in 2027, compared to 9 per cent in 2007.

25. The Council has also detected a deterioration of the job market, and the fact that half of the unemployed were young people between 15 and 25 years old and 60 per cent of job searchers were under 30 years of age. The Statistical Institute reported that the Polynesian labour market lost 2,000 jobs in 2011 and that the contraction that began in 2008 was continuing. The most recently published official unemployment rate is 11.7 per cent (2007 census). In 2012, specialists and statisticians acknowledged that this rate had increased sharply and that it was probably around 20 per cent, based on the criteria and definitions used by the statisticians.

C. Education

26. According to the Ministry of Overseas Territories:

> "In application of article 6 of the Autonomy Law 96-312 of 12 April 1996, primary and secondary education is the Territory's responsibility, while post-baccalaureate and higher education are the responsibility of the State.
>
> French Polynesia has 236 primary schools (including pre-primary and special-needs), and 99 secondary schools.
>
> The school year is not identical to that of the metropolis, owing to specific climate factors: the long vacations are shorter (roughly 50 days), and Christmas vacations are longer (about one month).
>
> Nonetheless, the State guarantees the national value of the diplomas awarded, while French Polynesia has total jurisdiction in terms of educational activities. Mayoralties register enrolments, generally around May each year.
>
> French Polynesia offers a varied educational system, with schools in all spheres.
>
> The University of French Polynesia, a public scientific, cultural and vocational establishment, is located in Outamaoro, in the community of Punaauia. Created in 1987 and autonomous since 1999, this young university has been a major hub of higher education and research activities for over 20 years."

27. According to the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, while school attendance is practically universal among young people, performance shortfalls compared to the metropolis persist, particularly in terms of gaining a diploma. The baccalaureate diploma rate in French Polynesia is half that recorded in the metropolis; and the Territory is even further from its goal of a 70 per cent baccalaureate rate set by the 2011 Education Charter.

D. Health

28. According to the Ministry of Overseas Territories, in 2007 Polynesia had more than 610 hospital beds in the public sector, and 260 beds in the private sector. Most medical personnel are public physicians, while private practitioners operate mainly on the island of Tahiti. French Polynesia's health-care facilities include a territorial hospital centre, a psychiatric hospital, 6 general hospitals and 22 medical centres and urban or rural clinics.

IV. Consideration by the United Nations

A. Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

29. The Special Committee reviewed the issue of French Polynesia at its ninth meeting on 21 June 2013, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/265. At that meeting, Senator Richard Ariihau Tuheiava addressed the Special Committee as representative of the Union For Democracy. He thanked Committee members for supporting efforts to restore French Polynesia to the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Arguing that the ground rules for the referendum in French Polynesia should be the same as those established in New Caledonia under the Nouméa Accord, which had imposed a 20-year residency condition to be able to vote, he stressed that it was also important to realize that the re-inscription of French Polynesia had happened because of the Territory's colonial nature and status quo.

30. At its ninth meeting, the Special Committee adopted a draft resolution submitted by the Committee Chairperson (see A/68/23, chapter XIII).

B. Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

31. At the fourth meeting of the Fourth Committee, held on 8 October 2013, Mr. Oscar Temaru, elected representative of the Union for Democracy to the Assembly of French Polynesia, expressed his gratitude to Member States of the United Nations for the adoption of resolution 67/265, which provided for the reinscription of French Polynesia/Ma'ohi nui on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Mr. Temaru claimed that this step corrected a 60-year injustice, and stressed that the administering Power had perpetuated the illusion of the Territory's autonomy, despite not respecting the minimum regulations defined by resolution 1514 (XV). The population and the islands had been subjected to 30 years of nuclear testing, which had had a devastating impact both on health and on the environment. The effects of these tests should be assessed by relevant international institutions to ensure that adequate compensation was paid to victims and their families. Mr. Temaru accused the administering Power of continual manoeuvres to exploit the natural resources over which populations had an unalienable right, including maritime resources. He stressed the need to raise public awareness about the options of self-determination. A reasonable period of civic education was needed to determine the future status of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Any proposal to organize an immediate referendum on independence would turn into an attempt to avoid an authentic self-determination process.

32. At the fourth meeting of the Fourth Committee, Richard Tuheiava, elected representative of the Union for Democracy to the Assembly of French Polynesia, thanked the General Assembly for having adopted resolution 67/265, through which it had reinscribed French Polynesia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. In relation to the draft resolution which the Committee had before it, he explained that it supported an authentic self-determination process that would enable the people of French Polynesia to decide the Territory's future political status. He criticized the administering Power for having proposed, in July 2013, an immediate referendum

with a single choice — independence, yes or no — without previously defining the criteria for eligibility to vote and submitting economic and social reform measures to redefine the development model. The real intention of this proposal was to maintain the existing colonial arrangements, by showing contempt for the legitimate aspirations for the Territory's independence, and confusing legitimate existing mechanisms with those of international law. Mr. Tuheiava explained that, since then, an evaluation of the Territory's self-governance had identified imbalances in the colonial arrangements. A United Nations-assisted awareness-raising campaign was needed to publicize the legitimate available options. In practice, a referendum organized by the administering Power would be a classic case of conflict of interest, incompatible with the doctrine of transfer of powers envisaged in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. He then returned to the impact of the nuclear tests undertaken by the administering Power on health and the environment, and demanded adequate compensation for the survivors, as stipulated in the draft resolution which the Commission had before it.

C. Action by the General Assembly

33. On 11 December 2011, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 68/93, based on the report of the Special Committee transmitted to the Assembly and its subsequent consideration by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the General Assembly:

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of French Polynesia to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

2. *Also reaffirms* that it is ultimately for the people of French Polynesia to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection calls upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of French Polynesia of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

3. *Calls upon* the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Special Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in French Polynesia, and encourages the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;

4. *Calls upon* the Government of France to intensify its dialogue with French Polynesia in order to facilitate rapid progress towards a fair and effective self-determination process, under which the terms and timelines for an act of self-determination would be agreed;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations, to compile a report on the environmental, ecological, health and other impacts as a consequence of the thirty-year period of nuclear testing in the Territory;

6. *Requests* the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of French Polynesia and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.